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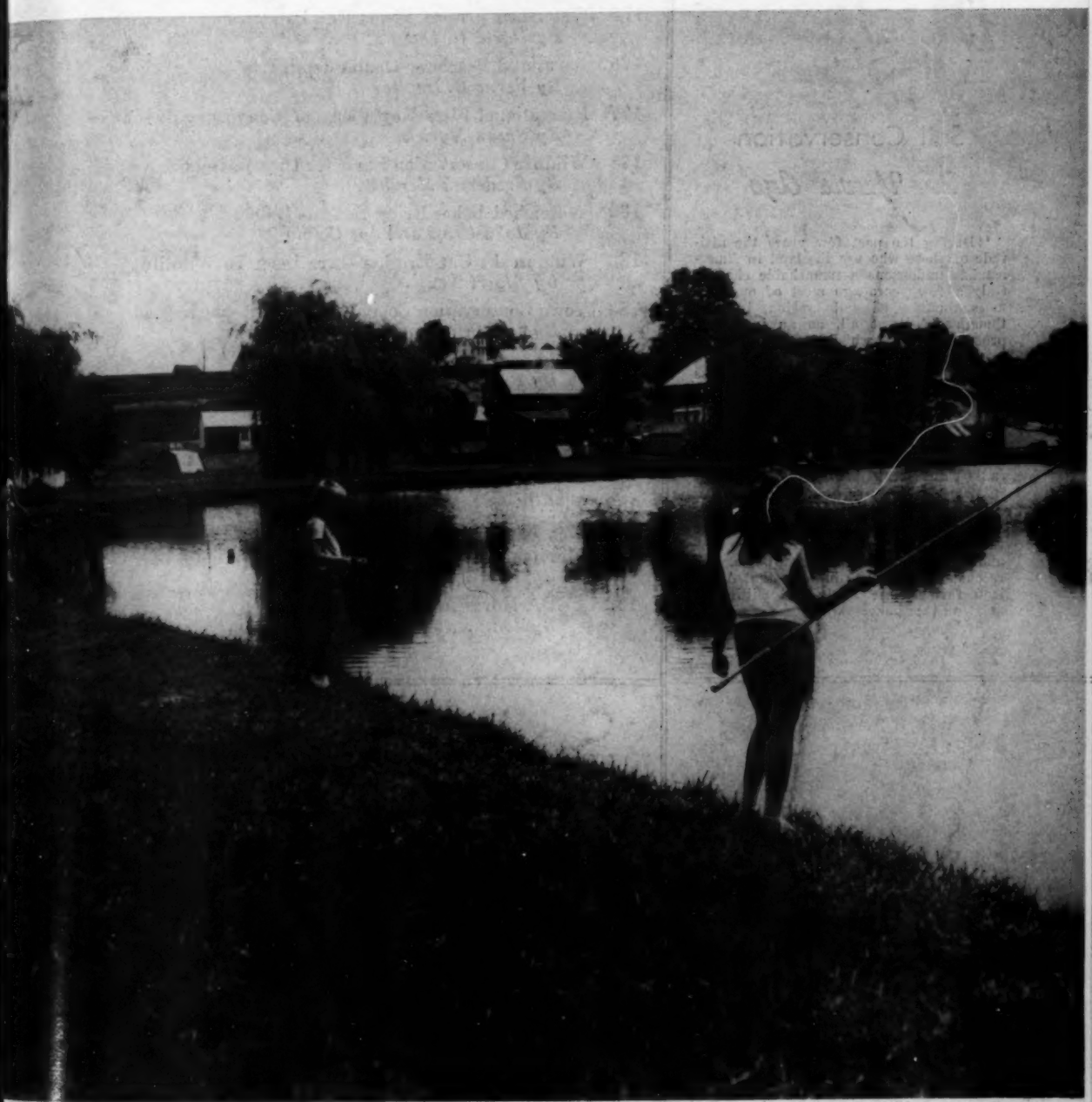
MARCH 1963

Soil Conservation



SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE • U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Soil Conservation
25 Years Ago

"During the past few years the attitude of those who use the land in America has undergone a remarkable change. Only a few years ago most of our farmers thought of soil erosion, if they thought of it at all, as an inevitable process of nature which caused them only inconvenience and irritation. They are now beginning to recognize that process as a very real peril to their own welfare, as well as that of the Nation, and to cope with it in a practical and effective manner.

"This change has been brought about, in part at least, by a national program of soil conservation. . .

"The task ahead is one that will require active soil conservation effort on the part of all those who live on the land and use it for agricultural purposes. And recent events seem to indicate that American farmers are ready and willing to start on this undertaking."

COVER PICTURE—Bass and bluegills provide good fishing for these youngsters trying their luck in the Westminster Community Pond designed by SCS technicians and stocked by the Maryland Game and Fish Commission in Carroll County.—Photo by Gordon S. Smith.

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Soil Conservation

ORVILLE L. FREEMAN
Secretary of Agriculture

DONALD A. WILLIAMS
Administrator, Soil Conservation Service

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FRANK B. HARPER, Editor

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Recreation Brings New Opportunities To Rural America

By Lloyd E. Partain

RECREATION on purpose rather than just by accident today is an increasingly important end product of small-watershed projects and other rural area and community conservation developments. There is a major compelling reason.

Our fast-growing population, concentrating more and more in urban areas from one end of the country to the other, has brought an upsurge almost overnight in public need and demand for outdoor space—both land and water—where people can make healthful use of their leisure time. Their tastes run from fishing or hunting to golf and other sports, to hiking and bird watching, to plain old-fashioned picnicking or other family outings.

Greatly stepped-up soil, water, woodland, and wildlife conservation during the last 25 years or so, through local efforts on farms and watersheds bolstered by State and Federal financial and technical help, pointed the way for natural and human resource interests to meet this, one of the Nation's most challenging opportunities of our day, in stride. And with the major part of the country's readily accessible or potential hunting and fishing and other recreational opportunities found on non-Federal agricultural lands, it was logical for appropriate agricultural interests, from landowners to agencies experienced in this field, to be called upon to share the responsibilities of the reconstituted national recreational program.

Thus many recreational enterprises developed by farmers, ranchers, and woodland owners in recent years had been with the technical help of the Soil Conservation Service and the Forest Service, both in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Even though there obviously were many new facets in the broadened recreational program recommended to Congress by the President early in 1962, it was but natural that already established techniques relating to outdoor recreation, such as fish and wildlife, biology, forestry, and soil, water, and range conservation, should have primary and expanded functions in the program's planning and supervision.

Historically, the Soil Conservation Service and the Forest Service have used those approaches in their coordinated resource conservation and development endeavors. The new program simply expedites through more positive action in the public interest the multiple use and multipurpose principles that have been soundly developed in recent years. They now can be—and are being—put into full force and effect on private lands.

Major impetus to recreational and other natural resource conservation and development was provided in a series of directives issued in November 1962 by Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman "mobilizing the full resources of the Department of Agriculture in the most far-reaching attempt since the thirties to create new economic opportunity, update wasteful and outmoded patterns of land use, and infuse new vitality into rural America."

"The whole of America will benefit," he said of the projected

Recreation spots like this one in South Carolina are family favorites.

Note:—The author is assistant to the Administrator on recreation, Soil Conservation Service, Washington, D.C.

This North Carolina farm recreation operator knows how to advertise.

broadened program based on the application of various new authorizations by Congress in the Food and Agriculture Act of 1962, as well as upon a redirection of prior policies and programs of the Department to help meet present and foreseeable needs of all the people of the Nation. Included are:

(1) Major land-use adjustments to shift surplus crop production acres to grass, trees, wildlife, and income-producing recreation purposes.

(2) Broadened opportunity for local organizations to develop recreational facilities and municipal and industrial water supply as functions of multipurpose projects undertaken pursuant to the 1954 Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act.

(3) Expanded economic opportunities to individual landowners and operators, rural communities, and related business and industry.

The Department of Agriculture's role in the application of these principles includes technical assistance in land-use planning, soil and water conservation, forestry, wildlife and recreation development; cost-sharing and long-term credit; and public information leadership. But, the Secretary emphasized:

"In every case, I have made local initiative and leadership the first criterion for Department help under the new programs. The Federal Government can provide incentive and technical services, but government cannot and should not do the conservation and development job for local people on privately owned land."

In this connection, the new directives opened the way to broadened opportunities and responsibilities for soil and water conservation districts as one of the major structures of local leadership and initiative in America. Technical assistance in land-use adjustments, soil and water conservation planning, and needed supervision of the application of practices is to be carried out in cooperation with the districts in accordance with a complete conservation plan for the entire farm, ranch, or other unit of privately owned land.

The Secretary's directives also assigned specific functions to agencies of the Department concerned, including assignment to the Soil Conservation Service of leadership and responsibility in "Income-Producing Recreation Enterprises on Rural Non-Federal Lands." It is the Department's policy to:

Use all available authorizations to encourage and assist rural landowners and operators and local organizations to develop hunting, fishing, and other recreational facilities as income-producing enterprises as part of a conservation plan for the entire land unit.

Enlist the cooperation of public and private agencies and organizations that can help landowners and operators in developing such undertakings.

Implement income-producing recreation developments through Farmers Home Administration loans to family-farm operators for establishing recreational developments to supplement farm income, and to groups of farmers and rural residents for recreation facilities related to shifts in land use.

Provide through appropriate agencies research, education, technical assistance, cost-sharing, and credit services needed in developing income-producing recreation on rural lands, including strengthened Rural Areas Development committees and technical action panels.

The 1962 Agricultural Act and the Secretary's policies for implementing them have established at

Water skiing is just one of the recreational uses made of lakes like this one in Georgia.

least three other milestones: (1) Recreational use of rural private lands is recognized as an agricultural use; (2) the objective in shifting land from row crops and small grains includes encouragement of the new uses for improving the income of individual landowners and operators and rural communities; and (3) resource conservation and development programs and projects are to make available, in addition to food and fiber, other products and services needed by rural and urban people alike. The demand for outdoor recreation looms large in this framework.

New information, experience, and training for all concerned is needed to assure the program's success. In short, even a well-designed farm plan, the carrying out of which would result in adequate physical treatment of land and water resources and adequate recreational facilities, will not necessarily of itself assure success for the landowner or operator in his new undertaking. He will need to know, for example, a great deal about the market for recreation services, and how to compete in that market and make a profit.

He may need financial and business management advice peculiar to this new aspect of his business. He will be dealing with people with varying likes and dislikes. In certain types of income-producing recreation, he and his family will have to perform jobs new to them; and employment of people with special skills may even be necessary, including architectural help on the design and specifications for buildings and other recreational installations. Health and safety regulations must be observed, and liability insurance has to be taken into consideration.

Additional cost-return information, economic and management research results, market studies, training of planning personnel and informing landowners and operators, exchange of experience, and practical promotion techniques all are needed to assure success of recreational undertakings on our farms and ranches. But the ever-growing need points to full justification of the effort. As President John F. Kennedy said in his State of the Union message to Congress on January 14, in discussing "new measures that we cannot afford to postpone:"

"Finally, our already overcrowded national parks and recreational areas will have twice as many visitors 10 years from now. If we do not plan today for the future growth of these and other great natural assets—not only parks and forests but wildlife and wilderness preserves, and water projects of all kinds—our children and their children will be poorer in every sense of the word."

Good quality recreation facilities on farms and ranches have proved popular and of benefit to farm and city people alike—such as lakes formed behind flood-prevention and multiple-purpose watershed structures, farm ponds, and streams and reservoirs protected from silt pollution. There already are uncounted examples of successful income-producing recreational developments on farms and ranches, but they represent only a beginning.

There is adequte space in rural America, as confirmed by the national inventory of soil and water conservation needs, for substantial further development for recreation purposes. Included are acreages of cropland not needed in the immediately foreseeable future for commodity production. Out-

These large-mouth bass from farm pond on H & H Ranch near DeSoto, Miss., averaged 3-¾ pounds.

Each week in season hundreds visit well-equipped Sportsman's Lake near Holdenville, Okla., built by the State with SCS assistance.

door recreation often can be made a rewarding part of a multiple-use plan for a farm or ranch.

It has been amply demonstrated that well planned recreational use of land and water can contribute to the conservation and protection of natural resources while, through efficient management, yielding income and satisfaction to families occupying rural lands and contributing to the economic betterment of rural communities and the strength and welfare of the entire Nation.

Texas Watershed Project Yields Bonus in Fun-Landowners' Income

By David O. Davis

WHEN the people in Green Creek watershed in central Texas began their flood-prevention project they had no thought of a possible bonus in fun. But, with the achievement of their flood-prevention goal, they also gained 13 lakes with water for fishing, boating, hunting, camping, swimming, and picnicking.

This part of Texas can get mighty dry. So another dividend from the project is water for irrigation and for livestock. The worth of the recreation, irrigation, and livestock water, all incidental to the original project purposes—flood prevention—is estimated at more than $15,000 a year alone.

Green Creek is one of 62 streams selected in 34 States authorized by Congress in 1953 for pilot demonstrations of a practical approach to complete watershed protection as a means of conserving soil and water resources. The Green Creek project plan included the construction of 13 flood-prevention dams to supplement land-treatment measures such as terracing, cover cropping, and range seeding, applied with technical help of Soil Conservation Service working with the Upper Leon Soil Conservation District.

What farmers and ranchers do in soil conservation districts and watersheds for soil and water conservation on their fields, pastures, range, and woodland all helps to slow down rainfall runoff and to help prevent floods. But, when unusually hard downpours come, these measures can't slow down all that water. That is where the flood-prevention dams do their part. These dams catch the extra water from the intense storms. Then the excess water drains from the dams, at a slow rate, so that the water has little chance to "pile up" somewhere and cause a flood.

Some water remains, however, in sediment pools behind the dams. These pools are designed to catch and hold back most of the sand and mud the floodwaters might bring in. This keeps the sediment from being deposited on bottom land fields or from filling stream beds.

Such pools may be lakes a few acres in area, or even a hundred acres. These are the lakes that provide recreation, stockwater, and irrigation in the Green Creek watershed.

The lakes are stocked with bass, bream, and catfish. Some of the owners have provided picnic tables and fire grates. Boats are available for rent. Because recreation areas have to be mowed and kept clean, several landowners have planted grass and shade trees for the comfort of picnickers and campers. Others have improved native tree sites on the lakeshores.

Nearly 6,000 people use the recreational facilities on these lakes every year. The added income to the landowners is esti-

Flood-prevention lakes in Green Creek watershed provide fishing, boating, swimming, hunting, camping, and picnicking, in addition to supplying water for supplemental irrigation and for livestock.

Note:—The author is field information specialist, Soil Conservation Service, Milwaukee, Wis.

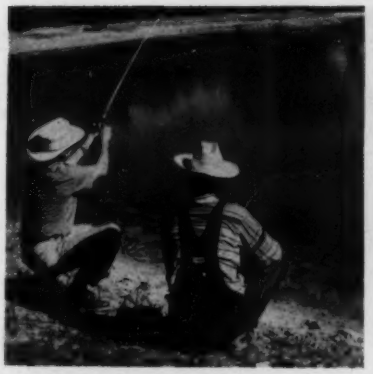
mated to be about $4,000 annually.

In addition, the extra water collected in 11 of the lakes makes it possible to irrigate more than 400 acres. This adds up to much better pasture and hay land, plus better yields from cultivated crops.

Sprinkler systems are commonly used for this irrigation. The average cost of these systems is about $5,000. Permits to use the water are obtained from the Texas Water Commission, at a cost of about $150. This cost, though, is offset by the total annual net return, in the watershed, of more than $10,000.

Farmers figure the additional livestock water is worth at least $1,000 to each of them each year. And it is not just at the lakeshores where this benefit shows up. For, when other stockwater sources begin to dry up, landowners with flood-prevention structures on their place open valves and share with neighbors downstream.

The sponsors, the Upper Leon district and civic groups in the city of Dublin and in Erath County, marshaled their resources for getting easements in October 1953. By February 1954 they had completed all easements—61 documents with 143 signatures. And the easements were given free by the landowners. The sponsors agreed to maintain the grass and fences around the structures. The result of this and other cooperative action by the people was that all structures planned for the watershed were completed by 1957.



Fishing from a watershed lake on the Richardson farm, 1 of 13 stocked with fish in Green Creek Watershed Project.

Picking up baled sudangrass hay that was irrigated from floodwater-retarding structure on W. K. Richardson farm.

Green Creek, in an area often subject to dry spells, has a history of floods. There were 87 floods during the 20-year period prior to the beginning of the watershed project. Even before all construction was completed, high intensity rainstorms struck the watershed. In 1956, for instance, three completed structures flowed 18 million gallons a day for 22 days. Had this volume of water rushed out all at once, both land and towns would have been hit hard. To date, benefits from the reduction of flood damages are estimated at about $361,000.

The people in Green Creek watershed are proud of their project. Leander Kiker, who has one of the lakes on his place, summed up the feelings of everyone when he said:

"The flood prevention is the most important. I've had water all over my best land too many times in the past to forget that. But—the extra water in the lakes is a nice thing to have, too. It is good to be able to irrigate when it hasn't rained for a long time—and to have water for your cattle. And it is good to have these places now where folks can go and have some fun and relax a bit."

Irrigating a stripcropped, contoured peanut field on Joe Paalmore farm with water from floodwater-retarding structure.

Have You Seen?....

● "Rural Recreation, A New Family-Farm Business," released by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The Secretary of Agriculture asked a task force of Department agency representatives to review the current status of recreational use of agricultural land and report on the possibilities of income-producing recreation enterprises on farms and ranches. This resulting report describes the kinds adapted to farms, with examples; cites factors affecting their development; suggests local organizations available to facilitate such farm recreation developments; and explains the role of the Department.

Doves and Peaches
Double Land Use

By Verne E. Davison

PEOPLE who may think "We can't spare any land for growing choice wildlife foods" could take a tip from the Caggino family of Gaffney in South Carolina's Cherokee Soil Conservation District.

The Cagginos made field-trial plantings of browntopmillet, a choice food of mourning doves, in several of their extensive peach orchards on their "Sunny Slope Farms" in 1961. These are sloping lands where erosion must be controlled by some kind of cover crop between the trees. Browntopmillet had not been used for this purpose, but it proved to be excellent.

A field trial like that suggested to the Cagginos by Soil Conservation Service technicians is simple: Plant what you have in mind; appraise its success in terms of soil and water conservation; and, in the case of dove habitat, determine its value to the birds and the success of hunting. Also look carefully at the costs, and at any likely disadvantages.

Although this trial planting was successful in 1961, the browntopmillet reseeded itself in 1962 and was even more satisfactory than it was the first year. Dove hunting has been excellent, with 200 to 300 birds taken each hunting day. Hundreds of doves stayed in 1961 until the browntop was turned into the soil, and they were numerous throughout the following nesting season.

As to problems:—In 1961, more than 200 uninvited dove hunters surrounded the orchards, and drove up and down the vegetated waterways. An occasional enthusiast didn't know the rules for shooting over orchard trees, and the Cagginos had a few trees damaged.

SCS Work Unit Conservationist Sam Wolfe in 1962 growth of browntopmillet he suggested for dove food.

By 1962, however, hunters were more considerate. They shot only from the farm roads and waterways, and left their vehicles off the waterways. Again the doves remained in spite of the hunting until the seed was turned into the soil.

A number of lessons were learned from these first two seasons' experience:

(1) Don't plant browntopmillet near public roads.

(2) Hold managed hunts only once a week, so peach pruners can work safely the rest of the week.

(3) Invite "paying guests." Use the income to defray the costs of managing the dove food—and the hunters—and thereby increase private and community profits from a new and enlarged agricultural crop.

(4) Leave some browntopmillet seed on top of the ground to feed the doves during the winter.

Such double land use should be both profitable and satisfying if these simple rules are followed.

Mourning doves thrive on browntopmillet cover crop in Sunny Slope Farms peach orchard.

Note:—The author is biologist, Soil Conservation Service, Athens, Ga.

Recreational Sites Near Home Key Phase of Conserving Soil—Water—Human Resources

By Susan Myrick

(Note:—Herself a cooperator with the Piedmont Soil Conservation District (Ga.), Miss Myrick for more than 15 years has told the story of districts and small-watershed programs; is author of a textbook, "Our Daily Bread," used in several States as a supplemental reader on soil and water conservation for elementary grades; received nationwide recognition for her promotion of the planting of blue lupine; and holds, among other honors for service to conservation and other agricultural endeavors, the 1963 Distinguished Service Award of the National Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. And Miss Myrick spent 7 months in 1939 in Hollywood as technical adviser on southern accent and manners during filming of "Gone With the Wind"!—Ed.)

WE'VE talked of conservation ever since Teddy Roosevelt's days; but millions of people still know nothing about it.

There are so many phases of conservation that it is difficult for the usual city man to know what the term means. Some think of conservation as cover crops to hold the soil; others think conservation is terraces; still others think it is grassing the road banks, reforestation, stopping forest fires, filling up gullies, building drainage ditches, building farm ponds, or big dams for irrigation; still others think of conservation only in terms of good fishing or hunting.

The woman, naturally, considers first her children, and her conservation thoughts turn toward making life a happy thing for the offspring. She thinks of good schools, of proper diet, of character building, of the spiritual values of life, and she wants the best for her children.

Susan Myrick.

In many cases, rural women find it difficult to provide these things for their children. Conditions on the farm are vastly better than they were even 25 years ago. And when I grew up on that plantation in Baldwin County, Ga., things were really difficult for the country child. The 2-mile walk to school was probably good for my physical fitness, but the rainy days with the muddy roads were not exactly pleasant. The one-room school with its big pot-bellied stove and its outdoor privy was not much of a place for a child to get an education.

The home lighted by kerosene lamps, and heated by firewood in fireplaces in each room, the home with no bathroom and no indoor plumbing—well, the wife and mother of that day had difficulties today's mother knows little of.

Yet, those country children had a great blessing. I would not swap mine. The blessing of chores to keep me busy, the blessing of having a calf to love and take care of, the blessing of being close to growing things, of damming up a little branch and wading in the stream, of catching catfish in Big Cedar Creek, of knowing about birth and death and life on the farm.

Today's city women have the problem of "no-outdoors" for their city-reared children. Schools, yes—far superior to those I know in my youth; but they have problems of crowded streets, no place to know the great outdoors, the lack of wilderness, the shortage of space and grass and trees, and the lack of opportunity to know birds and butterflies and wild flowers. All these mean much to the woman of today who is concerned about a full life for her children.

These days, it seems, people are excited over BIG things—man in space, trip to the moon, a billion pounds of TNT equivalent in that new bomb, a huge dam impounding billions of gallons of water. Many people take little interest, for example, in the small-watershed conservation program; some are even inclined to think of it as only a political handout to the farmer to provide a fish pond for him and his children.

We who know of the great value of the small-watershed program from a recreational, as well as a flood prevention and erosion control standpoint, must work to teach the others to understand that conservation of human resources must include opportunity for recreation as well as for work.

It's big doings to hunt deer in the Rockies, perhaps; but it is far more important that we have a

Note:—The author is associate editor, *Macon Telegraph*, and farm editor, *Telegraph and News*, Macon, Ga.

Ponds on J. D. Paulk and J. W. Trunnell farms in Central Georgia SCD do water conservation job in Bleckley County—for recreation activities like fishing and water skiing, and for livestock.

place near at home where we can get to the outdoors, or shoot at a few coveys of quail or a dove in season. It is fine to be able to go to the Florida keys and catch sailfish or to Maine to catch tuna. But the important thing is a place near home where the family can picnic and maybe tie onto a catfish or a black bass or some red bellies or bluegill.

We need as a part of our conservation work, today, to provide for recreational facilities for the people. From the woman's viewpoint, or the man's for that matter, conservation of human resources is the most important phase of conservation.

Wildlife Conservation Farm Developed for City Visitors

By Frederick Merrill

IT must have been the hundredth call in the 7 years Clerk Lois Anne Dickson of the Mahoning Soil and Water Conservation District in Ohio had received requesting this information: Where can Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Brownies, school groups, garden clubs, etc., go to see conservation in action?

This problem long had been plaguing the district board of supervisors, but this time Mrs. Dickson had an inspiration. She knew that no farmer wanted hordes of people trampling his fields; but she and her husband, Robert, had a farm they no longer were actively working. So why not use this farm to teach conservation? They accordingly decided that this might be the best possible use for their land, and what was to become "Brae Rabbit Farm" became their goal.

The Dicksons also knew that if the city folks were going to fulfill their expectations of seeing a rabbit explode from a clump of grass, or hearing the cackle of a pheasant as he is flushed from a patch of sericea lespedeza, they would need help. Opportunely, the Ohio Division of Wildlife also had been looking for a place to provide conservation education on private land; and Game Management Agent Ken Allen promptly became interested in the Dicksons' proposal. Using the original conservation farm plan that had been developed with the help of Soil Conservation Service technicians as a guide, Allen helped develop a wildlife management plan for the farm.

Lois Anne Dickson examines ear from strip of dwarf corn planted for wildlife food and cover.

One basic need for a farm wildlife community is variety. Small fields, with mixed vegetation patterns where several kinds of cover

Note:—The author is work unit conservationist, Soil Conservation Service, Canfield, Ohio.

meet, will support more rabbits, quail, and song birds than will large, open fields. Food supplies must be plentiful and close to cover that gives protection from their enemies. But, most important, food and cover must be available during the critical winter and early spring seasons when things are tough.

First came clearing of large trees from the fence rows, which accomplished two things: First, brush and briers now could grow to provide safe lanes of travel from one part of the farm to another and create undisturbed nesting cover. Second, the harvest from the fence rows provided material for brush piles that rabbits like so well. The Dicksons piled the larger logs on the ground, log cabin style. Then a generous supply of smaller branches was piled over the logs to form a roof. Nature helped, too, and grass and briers soon were adding to this protection from cold winter winds and predators.

One essential cover type was conspicuous by its absence—winter cover. Evergreens, in scattered small clumps, were planted to fill this need.

Next, long, narrow strips of dwarf corn and sericea lespedeza were planted, with hairy vetch interseeded on each strip. This vetch will afford good cover the second year, and act as a ground cover and green manure when the food patch is plowed down.

When the first troop of Girl Scouts arrived, the chicken house had been made over into a theater, where they were shown "before and after" pictures of "Brae Rabbit Farm." When they toured the farm, the wildlife performed exceptionally well. As they looked at the dwarf corn food patches, a hen pheasant and her brood scurried down the corn row. An old mother opossum sat on a walnut tree limb and impassively watched as the visitors rode by on a wagon pulled by the Dicksons' old tractor decked out in a new coat of paint. To climax the trip, a deer bounded from the thicket beside the spring.

City biology class gets first-hand look at soil, water, and wildlife conservation on Dickson farm.

Loading branches from trees thinned from fence row for hauling to build brush piles for rabbits in open pasture.

Most of the people in northeastern Ohio, as in many other parts of the country, live in cities and accordingly are open to greater appreciation of natural resources. It is conservation minded landowners like the Dicksons who can provide the opportunity for better understanding of wildlife and other conservation problems and their solutions.

◆

The University of Michigan Survey Research Center found that 9 out of 10 Americans participate in outdoor recreational activities. The most popular is driving for sightseeing and relaxation. Picnicking ranks next.

Watershed Lakes Bring T

By John Cross

Mayor Leon Sanders (r.) discusses plans for Plain Dealing's future with Dr. W. E. B. Lockridge.

"LAKE Plain Dealing" and "Lake Dogwood" are now important names to the folks at Plain Dealing in Louisiana's Bossier Parish. These floodwater structures, completed in 1961 in the Upper West Fork Cypress Bayou watershed, are pointed to with pride by Plain Dealing citizens.

"As many as 3,000 people in one day have used the lakes for swimming, boating, picnicking, and fishing," said Mayor Leon Sanders, who was one of the key figures in putting through the project. "They provide recreation for everyone from junior to grandma. Families who never used any recreation facility before now go to the lakes."

Cypress Bayou was one of the first watersheds in the United States to include fish and wildlife benefits in its original plan. The Louisiana Fish and Wildlife Service provided fingerlings to stock the lakes. A 5½ pound bass was caught in Lake Plain Dealing in November 1962!

Swings, slides, and a merry-go-round were built for the youngsters by J. T. Snyder and C. B. Gleason, partners in an automobile agency, at no cost to the town. Other local businesses around town built picnic tables and benches at no cost; and the Plain Dealing town council appropriated funds and built a boat landing ramp, an enclosed swimming area, and a steel diving platform. A bathhouse with indoor sanitary facilities also is in the plan.

A concession stand dispenses cold drinks and sandwiches. The city of Plain Dealing built it, but leases it for 5 percent of the gross sales. Boat launching costs $1, with the fees going into the recreation fund. No alcoholic beverages are allowed, and Concessionaire L. L. Norris is deputized by the sheriff so he can maintain order. Family-type recreation is encouraged.

The city of 1,300 people owns 60 acres of land around the lakes, part of which is under water and the rest of which is recreation area. Before the Cypress Bayou watershed was developed, youngsters had to travel 25 miles by bus for swimming. Now, the local athletic coach conducts swimming lessons at the lakes, only 1½ miles from downtown.

The story of Cypress Bayou and Plain Dealing isn't all about swimming and fishing. People can well remember, for example, when after a flood they had to go to the post office in a boat and shovel the silt out of their stores. But that is now a closed chapter, and flood-free Plain Dealers can relax and enjoy the multiple benefits of their protected watershed.

Actually, three floodwater structures now protect Plain Dealing, with one of them designed only for flood protection. Another includes 710 acre-feet of municipal water supply, and the third has 595 acre-feet of fish and wildlife water added to flood storage. Extra costs above floodwater storage were paid for with non-Federal funds.

Soil and water conservation measures to protect watershed lands were reported about 80 percent complete at the beginning of

Float that takes fishing groups out on Lake Dogwood.

Note:—The authors are assistant State soil conservationist, Alexandria, and work unit conservationist, Benton, both of the Soil Conservation Service, Louisiana.

Benefits Galore To Louisiana's Cypress Bayou Area

John Cros[illegible] Joe Colvin

1963, by Soil Conservation Service Work Unit Conservationist Joe Colvin, who has been "right-hand-man" technically to all the organizations participating in the Cypress Bayou watershed project. The National Watershed Congress named Cypress Bayou the "Watershed of the Year" in 1961.

Chairman R. D. Hinton of the Dorcheat Soil Conservation District, which sponsored the project, credits fullest cooperation between agencies, groups, and individuals as being "the whole secret of their success." The story began when information about Public Law 566, known as the small-watershed program, under which Federal technical and cost-sharing help is made available to local project organizations by the Soil Conservation Service, was requested by the Plain Dealing Lions Club in late 1955. In early 1956 an organization spearheaded by John Doles, Jr., met with the Dorcheat district with an application for planning assistance. From there Doles and Hinton "carried the ball" all the way through the State Soil Conservation Committee, of which Hinton also is chairman, and to completion of the project.

A bond issue for $52,000 was passed by the voters, 149 to 1, in 1956. The watershed plan shows non-Federal expenditures of $172,377, but if a dollar value could be placed on all the contributions, it would swell that figure manyfold. Family-type recreation, supervised summer health programs, increased community spirit, and the chance of new industry for area development are among the bonus benefits not shown anywhere in the watershed plan.

For example, roads to the lakes were built and black-topped by the Bossier Parish Police Jury across rights-of-way donated by local citizens. The S. H. Bollinger Company donated work crews and equipment for clearing and leveling the shore and picnic ground. Prisoners were used to clean the underbrush and other debris from the recreational area. Boy Scouts piled brush and planted grass. The Lions Club pays for service of a lifeguard, for whom it built a tower. Seven Plain Dealing citizens went together and bought an 80-acre tract of land to clear up an easement problem..

Women's Clubs have set up budgets to finance developments around the lakes, and Home Demonstration Clubs asked for an area to improve as one of their projects and use for outdoor meetings. The American Legion agreed to share the cost of the bathhouse. The Police Jury is sponsoring a contest for 4-H Clubs, in which the award-winning design for park facilities will be followed.

The project has stimulated community spirit to a new high. As Mrs. Thelma Brando, who works in an insurance office, observed: "People donated labor who have never been known to help with anything before."

Organization of the Plain Dealing Development Association is an outgrowth of the watershed project. One of its first proposals was for a rest home for senior citizens, made possible in part by the availability of 750,000 gallons of municipal water daily from one of the floodwater dams. Secretary-Manager W. E. B. Lockridge of the Association, a retired minister, pointed out, also, that "Every inquiry we get from prospective industries asks about recreation facilities for its employees, and we don't have to apologize on that score."

"Fishin' is good" in Lake Plain Dealing.

Windbreaks Cut Erosion Are Boon To Wildlife

By Albert Neu

FIELD and farmstead windbreak plantings in Minidoka County near Rupert where wind gusts sometimes hit 80 miles an hour are reducing wind erosion and crop damage and providing food and shelter for game and song birds in this Idaho irrigated area. Farmers in the Minidoka Irrigation District, organized in 1916, like these windbreak benefits and, as a result, have planted them throughout most of the area.

With the discovery of a large supply of underground water in 1947, the Northside Pumping Project was organized. Today, this 78,000-acre project, in 500 farming units, is irrigated from deep wells, with the exception of about 7,000 acres in the southwestern part of the county irrigated by means of a relift pump out of the Snake River. An additional 35,000 acres of private land has been brought under cultivation. All the land has been developed but a few isolated units.

With land development over the years, native grass cover was removed and the land laid open to wind erosion, which has been serious at times.

Ed Smith, now a supervisor of the Minidoka Soil Conservation District organized in 1955, drew one of the farms on the Northside Pumping Project along about 1953 in one of a series of project land drawings for veterans, and moved his family from Colorado onto their 110-acre homestead 9 miles northeast of Rupert. He recalls that at times during their first year here they couldn't see 150 feet, because of the dust stirred up when many homestead farms were started.

By 1958, he had his farmstead laid out with Soil Conservation Service help and decided to establish a windbreak on the west side of the farmstead. In cooperation with the Minidoka SCD and the Idaho Fish and Game Department, he planted a 4-row windbreak, consisting of Nanking cherry, Russian olive, black locust, and southernwood. The row of southernwood acts as shade and protection for evergreens planted last spring.

Ed Smith, Mrs. Smith, and son Larry in their 4-year-old windbreak.

By the 1961-62 season, some protection already was provided by the 0.4-acre cultivated and irrigated windbreak planting, which is about 300 feet long and 60 feet wide. An important additional benefit is the food and shelter it provides for game birds. Smith has seen many pheasants in his trees, and doesn't have to go far to get his game when the season opens. Grass will be seeded between the tree rows, to eliminate weeds and provide additional food and cover for game birds the year around.

When the native ground cover was removed as the land was put under cultivation, the game birds lost much of their source of food and shelter, and there has been a definite need to replace it in order to maintain their productivity in the area. The Idaho Fish and Game Department has estabished several odd-area plantings in the county to

4-year-old Minidoka County farmstead windbreak.

Note:—The author is soil conservationist, Soil Conservation Service, Jerome, Idaho.

provide wildlife food and shelter.

With the wind erosion problem in mind, the soil conservation district board entered into an agreement with the department in 1957. Through this agreement, direct assistance became available for windbreak and wildlife plantings. The Fish and Game Department has carried on an annual program in the Minidoka SCD, where approximately 30 tree plantings are made each year. In 1962, the Walcott Soil Conservation District also worked out an agreement with the department for help in its tree-planting program.

In the Minidoka SCD alone, there have been about 127 plantings made for individual landowners, consisting of about 48,676 trees—or approximately 66 acres planted in trees and shrubs in nearly 15 miles of windbreaks.

The type of plantings made in Minidoka County consists of four kinds: (1) Farmstead windbreaks of 3 to 5 rows to protect farmsteads and feedlots; (2) field windbreaks, usually consisting of 1 or more rows, which protect adjacent land from wind erosion; (3) woodlots planted on small tracts that do not fit into the field layout; and (4) odd-corner or wildlife plantings on areas that likewise do not work into the farming program, such as point rows and waste areas. Nearly 20 species of trees and shrubs are used, to give maximum wind protection and provide food and shelter for wildlife.

Town Conservation Commission Is New Resource Improvement Tool

By Lillian P. Sartain

MASSACHUSETTS has come up with a new tool for furthering the welfare of its soil, water, wildlife, and woodlands—the Town Conservation Commission.

Launched under provisions of State legislation, 155 such commissions have been organized and activated from Cape Cod to the Berkshire Hills. In nearly half the eligible State's communities, therefore, they have become civic forces to be reckoned with. Commissioners already have transformed their influence well beyond the talk stage: They've interlocked interests with Massachusetts' 15 soil conservation districts, and town resource guardians are helping to revitalize land protection and development.

By special arrangement, Soil Conservation Service soil surveyors are helping to supply information as to acreage suitability for housing, industry, athletic fields, wildlife refuges, and similar urban needs. When these data have been processed by State and local planning boards and professional consultants, the commissioners hope they will have helped establish a precise method of conservation planning entire communities.

With 5 million people on 5 million acres, Massachusetts is the third most densely populated of the 50 States. As has been the case in much of the industrial Northeast, more and more of the Bay State's agricultural lands and other open areas have been vanishing beneath shopping centers, housing developments, and industrial "parks." In addition, the State's network of 25,000 miles of improved roads includes more than 775 miles of land-gobbling turnpikes, expressways, and limited access highways.

Laying plans for pond (l. to r.): Contractor Joseph Dedeo, Vincent Palumbo of Medfield Recreation Committee, Henry Ritzer of the SCS, and Roy Owens and Ellis Allen of Town Tree Department.

It was with an eye on a further population increase of 17 percent expected by 1970 that the legislators authorized formation of the new town units 5 years ago. The conservation commissions are made up of three to seven members, appointed by the local community governing bodies. They have annual budgets of up to $15,000 apiece, and have a broad assignment. They can hire help; acquire land and water, and develop and manage it under conservation plans; inventory resources, conduct educational campaigns and administer resource programs in cooperation with a wide range of other civic groups and agencies.

Note:—The author is State office secretary, Soil Conservation Service, Amherst, Mass.

Ample parking space like this in Medfield project is important in developing community recreation areas.

Community recreation pond developed by Medfield, Mass., Town Recreation Commission with SCS assistance.

The handiwork of the more enthusiastic commissioners already is visible. In eastern Massachusetts, for example, the town of Weston snapped up widely separated parcels of land and tied them together with a safe, delightful, and satisfactorily long nature trail for local outdoor fans. Nearby Sudbury, famous for Longfellow's Tale of the Wayside Inn, is planning the development of 10 square miles of watershed for wildlife and recreation.

Hingham, on the south coast, has picked up 60 acres of salt meadow —30 acres in the upland and easements along hundreds of yards of streambank. These areas spared from subdivision provide relaxation for townsfolk, and make possible conservation activities such as nature walking and tree planting by school children.

Needs for outdoor recreation continue to have high priority, and most of the commissions have moved initially to link arms with State and Federal agencies in saving open space. The town of Medfield found this answer to the problem: A former cattail swamp was converted to a model community center for water sports. It features a 1¼-acre pond, sandy beaches, diving docks, a bathhouse, picnicking grounds, and plenty of parking space. In warm weather, it accommodates 200 people a day.

The nature and number of cooperators in the Medfield project illustrate a renewed strength in conservation accomplishment brought out by the local commissions. Among sources of help drawn upon by the town were the Soil Conservation Service, the Norfolk Soil Conservation District, the State Department of Natural Resources, the State Board of Health, and the American Red Cross.

In larger projects, too, the town commissions have shown their mettle. Two commissions are cosponsoring the Powdermill Brook small-watershed project in south-central Massachusetts. One commission did all the legwork in obtaining easements and rights-of-way. Multiple use is being achieved by means of a park development at one flood-prevention site.

Most town conservation commissions are knee deep in reappraising their renewable resources, and their findings are being injected into a revolutionary approach to master planning in this land of the bean and cod.

Have You Seen?....

● "Soil Conservation at Home," by SCS, published by USDA as Agriculture Information Bulletin 244. Because the United States is becoming more an urban Nation, urban and suburban land poses new conservation problems. This bulletin includes "Tips for City and Suburban Dwellers" in dealing with them.

Profit And Fun In Recreation Farming

By R. N. Hoit

ALABAMA dairy farmer J. C. Sharpe has turned his 250-acre farm 6 miles north of LaFayette into a profitable recreation center called Dizzy-Land and is having the time of his life operating it. And he's working fewer hours and making more money than he did from his dairy.

"I really enjoy what I am doing," Sharpe says. "I look forward to every day with enthusiasm. This kind of 'farming' is fun. Running a dairy is hard work any time, but especially when labor is scarce and you have to do most of the work yourself."

Sharpe, who became a cooperator with the Piedmont Soil Conservation District in 1940 and completed a basic plan with the district, was a row-crop farmer and dairyman for 21 years. He operated a 32-cow dairy from 1940 until 1954, when he converted his farm into a recreation center, a changeover he actually started 3 years earlier.

Today he has six ponds totaling 40 acres of water. He received help from the Soil Conservation Service through the district in planing, designing, and supervising the construction of these ponds.

He also has a 75-acre recreational area consisting of a golf course, a playground, picnic tables, a concession stand, and a meeting place for clubs and other organizations. There are two softball fields and facilities for such games as horseshoes, badminton, and shuffleboard. He caters mainly to church groups, family reunions, and clubs. Individuals and small groups, however, also are welcomed.

Swings, rides, games, and all the equipment on the recreational grounds are homemade. Sharpe used old farm equipment and timber from the farm to build them. He has no motor driven equipment, because it would require additional labor for supervision.

One of 6 lakes at Dizzy-Land.

When Sharpe decided to convert his farm into a recreational area, the pastures were changed into an 18-hole golf course with sand "greens." He says that he can still see effects of the fertilizer and lime he applied to the grass while it was being used as pasture. He keeps the fairways mowed with a tractor and mower formerly used on the dairy farm. Sharpe is his own "pro," playing regularly with customers. He shoots par or better.

This "diversification" isn't exactly something new with the Sharpes. From 1940 to 1946, Mrs. Sharpe baked and sold enough pound cake to build a new $6,500 house. Their old home now serves as a club house.

Why did Sharpe give up farming for the recreation business? There were several reasons, he said. Labor was just one.

"This is something I can do with the help of one man," he explained. "I couldn't run the dairy by myself, and it was hard to keep help and to clear enough to pay for labor and still make a profit.

"Also, with more leisure time,

One of the homemade rides at Dizzy-Land—as long as the kids want for 10c admission.

Note:—The author is State soil conservationist, Soil Conservation Service, Auburn, Ala.

Golfers on Sharpe's former cow pasture golf course.

more people are looking for private, uncrowded places where they can take their families for a day out of doors; and they are willing to pay reasonable fees for the privilege of enjoying fresh air, sunshine, and relaxation.

"I figure that by making recreation my 'money crop,' I am providing something needed by the growing population, and I'm having fun doing it."

Sharpe charges admission—10 cents a person—to the recreational area, and a 50-cent fee for golfing or fishing. He operates a concession stand selling soft drinks, candy, and cookies. An old milk cooler is now a soft drink box. The business advertises itself through users' telling friends. They come mostly from LaFayette and Roanoke, Ala., the Chattahoochee Valley towns, and nearby counties in both Alabama and Georgia.

Sharpe's experience has proved that farm-based recreation for profit will pay off.

"My income now is about double what it was when I was in the Grade A milk business, and it's getting better every year," he reported. "School and church groups, clubs, and family reunions keep Dizzy-Land overflowing. Every week-end next summer has already been booked."

Kids' Ranch Camp Outpays Farming

By Walter S. Allen

ONE North Carolina farmer has found his biggest and best cash crop to be kids—the two-legged kind.

From June through August, up to 80 children at a time spend 8 action-packed hours a day at Lake Haven Ranch Camp in the Morning Star Township near Matthews. The ranch bosses are Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hood—both farmers, youth counselors, and lovers of children.

Most of the children who visit the East Mecklenburg County ranch camp are 8- to 16-year olds from close-by Charlotte or Monroe, who enjoy new experiences on the farm every day. Some are resident campers, and others ride the ranch (station) wagon to the camp and back to their homes each day. It's all girls among the residents for 4 weeks, and then the "cowboys" take over for 8 weeks.

They all get the most fun out of doing what farm children grow up doing every day—riding horses, feeding the cows and chickens, helping with the milking, and especially rounding up the cattle. Of course there also are the conventional camping activities—swimming, fishing, riding, archery, arts and crafts, nature study, hiking, and rifle practice.

The Hoods on the job at their summer camp.

But the farm angle intrigues the young campers most. Somehow, those cows just keep straying off and have to be rounded up. The mules, the tractors, the chickens, the dogs, and even a few burros add to their enjoyment, and some-

Note:—The author is field information specialist, Soil Conservation Service, Spartanburg, S. C.

times amazement.

The Hoods pondered the ranch camp idea for their farm for a long time before they put it into effect 4 years ago.

"It used to be that the city folks would take their kids out to the country to see their grandparents," Mrs. Hood said. "Now grandfather, grandmother, and most of the other relatives are all living in town, too."

As the demand for more outdoor recreation for the young people of Charlotte and other cities increased, Hood saw the opportunity to serve the community and at the same time add to his farm income. He had tried for years to make a success of the 300-acre farm in a similar manner to his grandfather's method—growing cotton, corn, and other row crops.

"One day back in 1944 after water washed out a gully 45 feet wide in my cottonfield I decided to make some changes." he recalled.

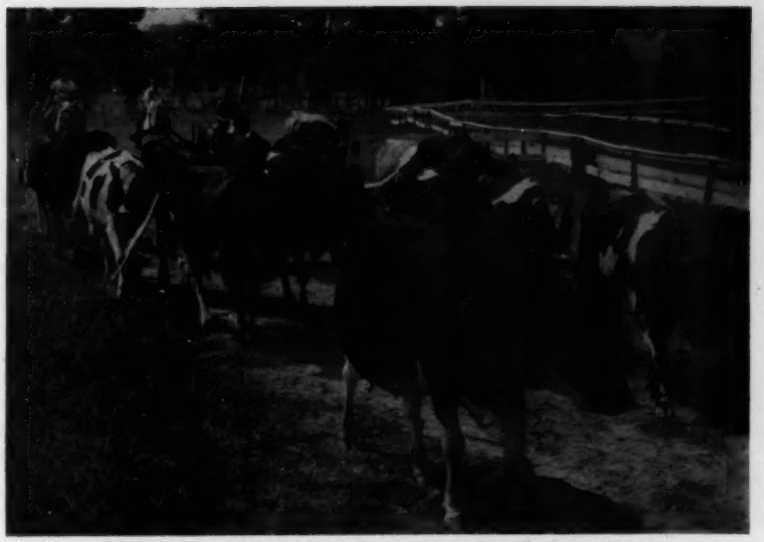
Hood discussed his problems with the Soil Conservation Service technician in the Mecklenburg County Soil Conservation District, who advised converting the row crop land to fescue and clover pasture, building terraces and farm ponds, and improving his pine timber stand. Hood has good reason to be happy that he took that advice. The grasses and terraces stopped the erosion. Nine ponds fed by natural springs were developed. The timber has thrived.

Hood established a dairy herd, which he still maintains. But he says he has a better income from the camp than from the dairy.

"I've got 50 children coming out here today for a weekend camping trip," he commented one Friday. "They'll pay me more than I used to get for two bales of cotton."

When it's chow time, a big farm bell rings and all the little "cowboys" or "cowgirls" scamper for the chowhouse to put away double helpings of fresh vegetables and other farm-grown food. Hood knows a lot about preparing and serving food, because at one time he was manager of a restaurant in New York City, where he also attended Columbia University. Mrs. Sanford Morton, a member of his staff, is a former school dietician.

Mrs. Hood was a Girl Scout leader for years, and recruits some of the camp's best counselors from her former Girl Scouts.



Rounding up the cattle on Lake Haven Ranch Camp farm.

The Hoods have turned their camp project to good account in inspiring young folks to build up their self reliance, relax, and enjoy the simple things. They will tell you that their biggest thrills come from helping other people's children enjoy for the first time the many fascinating things that take place on American farms every day.

Young campers get boating instructions on one of 9 spring-fed lakes developed on the Hood farm.

Watershed Reservoirs *Draw Paying Customers*

by Sellers G. Archer

SEVEN flood detention reservoirs on the Six Mile Creek Pilot watershed project in western Arkansas attracted paying customers who spent 9,500 fishing days there in a single year. For the privilege, they paid the landowners $7,125 at 50 cents to $1 a day each. Much of the money was deposited in collection boxes while the farmers went about other business.

Another reservoir is leased to employees of a public service company for $800 a year by William Magerlein, owner. The group has installed camping, boating, picnicking, and other facilities. One reservoir used by Bonneville as a supplemental water supply, is open to fishing without a fee, and is heavily used. Another structure, owned by Jack Corley, a supervisor of the Magazine Soil and Water Conservation District, entertains youth and church groups, clubs, and neighbors at no charge. Twelve other reservoirs are restricted to the use of friends and neighbors.

An overall cost to a fisherman of $3.50 a day is an accepted figure in this area—less the amount of a fee when fishing privileges are free. Consequently, in addition to $7,925 they paid to the landowners, these Six Mile Creek watershed fishermen alone enhanced the local economy an average of about $3 a day each for bait, tackle, boats, trailers, gasoline, food, and other necessities.

Multiply this figure by 29,300—the estimated number of fishing days provided by all of the reservoirs in the watershed in a year—and the total is about $88,000 going to suppliers of the many services and goods that fishermen need. This added income from recreational use of watershed protection and flood prevention developments represents a substantial boost to business in the area. It is in addition to the business realized from new industries attracted to the area as a result of the watershed project developments. (See SOIL CONSERVATION, January 1962.)

Ed Flanagan has found that fishermen using flood-detention reservoir on his farm are honest.

This 40-acre watershed reservoir is used as supplemental water supply for Booneville and is open to fishing without charge.

Much of the sportsmen's money went into about 500 boats, 100 trailers, and 100 outboard motors reported sold in the area since the watershed reservoirs were built.

But the story is not all told when the fishing is accounted for.

Owners make no charge for boating and hunting; but in 1961, the latest full year for which figures are available, there were an estimated 4,000 man-days spent in frog-gigging, 1,600 days hunting deer, raccoon, and waterfowl, and 500 days of boating and water skiing. There likewise was no charge for 6,500 swimming days and 3,500 days of camping; but

Note:—The author is field information specialist, Soil Conservation Service, Spartanburg, S. C.

some additional expenditures were involved in most of these various recreational activities. Total recreational use of the watershed for the year was estimated at about 45,000 man-days.

Recreational use of the watershed has not reached its maximum, nor has the income to landowners reached its potential. Only time will tell what it will be.

"Recreational use has been important in the watershed structures," says William B. Davey, State conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service, through which Federal technical and financial help was provided for the local watershed project sponsored by the Franklin County and Magazine (Logan County) soil and water conservation districts. "In the past we have greatly underestimated this feature in rating the full potential of watershed projects. And, most importantly, this land is still on the tax books."

New Hope for Urban Area Wildlife

By James S. Bennett

WILDLIFE land use in crowed northeastern Ohio urban areas is being stepped up by the simple means of increasingly popular tree and shrub planting "packets" distributed by soil conservation districts.

The wildlife packet idea was started in Ohio by the Ashtabula Soil Conservation District, where the packets were sold to district cooperators for planting as a specific part of their conservation plans. This is still an annual project carried out by this district; but the Cuyahoga and Summit districts in the Akron-Cleveland area now make the packets available to any landowner who will promise to plant them. Other districts in northeastern Ohio prepared to sponsor wildlife packets in 1963.

During 1962, approximately 900 urban families bought wildlife packets from the districts and planted them for food and cover for wildlife. Most of the plantings were on small tracts, of 1 to 5 acres, where housing developments have eliminated most of the protective cover for insect-eating birds and animals.

A wildlife packet is simply an assortment of trees and shrubs that have been selected as a desirable cover for wildlife. The district buys the planting materials in wholesale lots from local nurseries, and the supervisors package them. Because many of the landowners need advice as to how the planting should be done, the district provides a sheet of instructions with each packet.

Cuyahoga SCD supervisors wrap wildlife packets. (Upper l. to r.): Howard Starkey and Neil Richardson; (lower); Earl Foote, George Johnston, and Charles Snow.

The landowners may choose between two or three different packets. For example, packet A in 1962 included: 25 white pine; 25 Austrian pine; 25 Scotch pine; 25 Norway spruce; 25 Colorado blue spruce; 7 symphoricarpus; and 7 Red Osler dogwood.

During the past 3 years, the Cuyahoga district sold packets to 1,264 urban landowners. The packets consisted of Austrian pine, 46,225; Scotch pine, 17,150; Norway spruce, 46,275; Colorado blue spruce, 18,125; multiflora rose, 93,750; Red Osler dogwood, 4,843; symphoricarpus, 4,843; cotoneaster, 725; regel privet, 725: euonymous, 3,570. This distribution indicated that approximately 1,300 acres was planted to wildlife cover in the Cleveland metropolitan area alone.

In 1962, the first year the Summit district made packets available, more than 475 landowners bought them.

Soil Conservation Service technicians assigned to the Cuyahoga and Summit districts agree that the wildlife planting packet program fills a real need in urban counties. It not only is a means of converting some open land to a useful purpose, but also helps the

Note:—The author is ass't. State conservationist, Soil Conservation Service, Columbus, Ohio.

Strip-mine pond, stocked with bass and bluegills, with pine and locust wildlife area plantings.

districts in obtaining new cooperators—an estimated 30 to 40 in the Cuyahoga district, for example. In addition, the districts are able to make a little profit on the packets, as the supervisors donate the labor. With the proceeds, the districts have been able to purchase and distribute quantities of educational bulletins to the city and county schools, and to send youngsters to conservation camps and other much needed conservation educational projects in urban areas.

"This project has proved one thing," in the words of one Cuyahoga supervisor, "and that is the fact that urban people are still very much interested in conservation and will do something about it if given the chance."

Mississippi Farmers Cash in on Recreation

By Rose Fleming

FARMERS in many sections of Mississippi are cashing in on recreation as the most profitable use of some of their land.

They are building ponds and stocking them with bass and bream, providing boats, and renting fishing privileges. Some are raising quail or pheasants. Others are developing land for dog training or charging for hunting in season.

Is this profitable for the farmer? What are his expenses? How does he feel about this new business of recreation on the farm? Typical answers to these questions are provided on a day's tour of farm ponds and lakes near Jackson. All these farms are owned by soil conservation district cooperators who have developed conservation plans with technical help of the Soil Conservation Service.

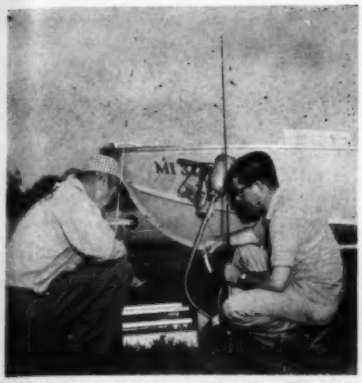
Lake Rosa R at Bolton is one. People fish here year-round. Owner J. B. White, raising beef cattle and soybeans on his 5,200-acre farm, apparently thought well enough of his original plunge into a recreation project to undertake another. He opened a second lake—Cecil J—in March 1962, and soon began constructing a third. But, he cautions, lake operation is not for the farmer who has to have a "quick return."

For one thing, he found that fertilizer and boat costs and repairs come high. Then the cost of building a lake can be high. White built Cecil J in hilly country, where it was necessary to excavate 61,000 cubic yards of earth and build a levee 32 feet high. He was fortunate enough to have two bulldozers he could use to move this earth, but other farmers might need to give careful consideration to this outlay for construction.

There are 31 boats on White's

Owner J. B. White with fish catch from Lake Rosa R near Bolton, Miss.

Note:—The author is writer-editor, Soil Conservation Service, Jackson, Miss.



Mississippi fishermen Lacey Hughes (l.) and J. L. Clark of Jackson get set at S Bar C Ranch near Canton.

two lakes. He charges a fisherman $1 a day to fish, plus $1 for a boat if he rents one. Fees are payable at the corner store which the family operates. Even so, during fishing season, White spends about 2 hours a day in lake supervision. When the Cecil J Lake opened, a record crowd turned out; 10 days afterward, he signed in 330 fishermen.

Vance Lake near Edwards has helped its owner, J. M. Vance, pay for a modern brick home on the lake front. The primary source of income for the farm is a laying-hen operation.

Opened in 1959, this lake draws family parties. Vance piped deep-well water to picnic areas under the moss-hung trees along the shore, and put in electrical connections for radios, hot plates, and coffee-makers. At the gate his honor box receives cash deposits from the fishing parties—$1 a day for each fisherman. There are few violaters. Boats are free as long as they last. Vance does not allow night fishing.

Mississippi's mild climate allows almost year-round fishing; but during extraordinary freezes, parties even have built fires on the lake bank and chopped holes in the ice to fish for crappie. Deepened lake edges and plenty of fertilizer so far have produced a good crop of fish. Vance has done all the construction around the lake himself —including piers, boat house, and a cabin where he stores his own fishing equipment. He says clean-up and repair jobs around the lake take about ⁹ hours a week.

The Vances both like to fish, and say their fishing business is more play than work.

Lake Sherlee, owned by Roger W. Stribling, Jackson equipment dealer, is a peaceful spot for weary businessmen, who can make the drive to Mansdale in half an hour. His fishing charge is $1 a day for each person and a $1 a day for a boat. Frequently 40 or more people are fishing the lake at the same time. On weekends, the Striblings allow water skiing on the mile-long skiing area.

The Striblings live in Jackson and operate their beef cattle farm as a sideline. The lake originally was intended for their own family's recreation, but it has developed into a small business.

The S Bar C Ranch near Canton, owned by the Southern Cattlemen's Association, has a choice lake patronized by local people as well as by visitors from neighboring counties; but the lake area also is being planned for State and national field dog trials and for professional dog training as

Manager J. F. Stout with young dog being trained at S Bar C Ranch, which has horses and guides for bird hunters.

as well as for hunting. Manager J. F. Stout, who operates the 4,000-acre beef cattle operation, is proud of the fact that in 1962, a dog he owned and trained on the S Bar C—Primos Rowdy—was runner-up for the national amateur championship.

The S Bar C furnishes guides and horses for hunters. It costs two men $50 for an afternoon's quail hunting. The fee for dove hunting is $5 a gun for an afternoon. Feed plots of field peas and browntop millet furnish food for quail, and plots are also planted for doves.

Roger W. Stribling's Lake Sherlee near Mansdale is one of Mississippi farm ponds that bring owners added income from fishing fees.

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USDA Moves Ahead On Recreation

By John A. Baker

THE Department of Agriculture is interested in recreation development on farms for four primary reasons: (1) It offers a chance to provide additional income to farmers and associated businesses and may help some farmers to stay on their farms; (2) it can aid in diverting cropland to a more profitable use for the owners; (3) it provides an urgently needed service for urban as well as rural people and farmers and nonfarmers alike; and (4) it can help improve the economy of a community and contribute to rural areas development.

The Department's recreational assistance will be available to farmers or groups of farmers who want to develop income-producing recreational enterprises and to small watershed project sponsors who want to develop public recreational facilities as part of the watershed work plan.

To individual and groups of farmers wishing to develop income-producing recreational facilities on their farms, the Department, through the Soil Conservation Service, will provide technical assistance relating to the new uses of the land and water. The recreational development will be included in the overall conservation plan for the farm unit.

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture John A. Baker.

The Soil Conservation Service will draw upon the experience that the Forest Service has accumulated over the years in developing specific recreational facilities in the national forests and that of State agencies, many of which have long experience in this field. The Farmers Home Administration is authorized to provide long-term individual loans and also loans to groups for recreational developments. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service is authorized to cost share certain recreational measures.

In small watershed projects, sponsoring groups may obtain cost-sharing assistance up to 50 percent for enlarging a reservoir for recreational purposes, acquiring necessary land rights, and building minimum basic facilities. Cost sharing on minimum basic facilities may include boat docks and ramps, beach development, sanitary and power facilities, roads, trails, parking lots, public water supply, and similar developments.

Funds are available and the Department is ready to move ahead on the new recreational phase of the watershed program. Already sponsors of more than 30 small watershed projects are definitely planning to include recreation in their projects.

Recreational developments are not something to be taken lightly. Tourist expenditures have been estimated at about $25 billion annually. People are seeking the out-of-doors as never before. They want to fish, boat, swim, camp, and picnic, and they want these places close to home.

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